

CONFIDENTIAL

PTQ4865

RELEASED IN PART
B6, B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06024 01 OF 02 101711Z
ACTION EUR-01

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	INL-01	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	LAB-01	L-00	MCO-01	MOFM-04	MOF-03	M-00
	AC-01	NRRC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	IRM-00
	SSO-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	SA-01	IIP-00	SNIS-00	NISC-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	FDIC-01	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	/021W					

-----3DA6C6 101711Z /38

O 101656Z MAR 00

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9065
INFO MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
CIS COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 006024

HELSINKI PLEASE PASS TO ST. PETERSBURG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 3/10/10

TAGS: PGOV, RS

SUBJECT: RUSSIA'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION -- BALANCING
INTRIGUE AND FEAR DURING THE CAMPAIGN'S LAST TWO WEEKS

REF: MOSCOW 5533

CLASSIFIED BY EDWARD SALAZAR, CHIEF, INTERNAL
CONFIDENTIALPAGE 02 MOSCOW 06024 01 OF 02 101711Z
POLITICAL AFFAIRS. REASONS: 1.5 (B,D).-----
SUMMARY

1. (C) TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE MARCH 26 PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION, PUTIN'S FIRST-ROUND VICTORY APPEARS
INCREASINGLY LIKELY. POLLSTERS NOW SEEM UNANIMOUS IN
THEIR EXPECTATION THAT MORE THAN 50 PERCENT OF VOTERS
WILL COME TO THE POLLS, ENSURING THE ELECTION'S
VALIDITY. WHILE ON THE SURFACE THE CAMPAIGN APPEARS
CALM, IF NOT SOMNOLENT, VARIOUS INTRIGUES, INCLUDING
THE FUNDING OF MINOR CANDIDATES BY THE KREMLIN OR THE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: FRANK H PEREZ
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 9 MAR 2015
DATE/CASE ID: 04 SEP 2007 200702380

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

KPRF ARE ACTIVE. WORRIED ABOUT THEIR OWN FUTURES IN A PUTIN PRESIDENCY, MANY REGIONAL LEADERS MAY TRIP OVER THEMSELVES TO DELIVER THE VOTES AND PLEASE THE KREMLIN. HOW WELL "AGAINST ALL" MAY FAIR REMAINS AN OPEN QUESTION. THE NUMBER OF VOTERS WHO STILL ARE UNDECIDED AT THIS STAGE OF THE CAMPAIGN IS RELATIVELY HIGH, BUT IS UNLIKELY TO AFFECT THE EVENTUAL OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION. END SUMMARY

ON CRUISE CONTROL

2. (C) A LITTLE MORE THAN TWO WEEKS REMAIN UNTIL RUSSIA'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS ON MARCH 26 AND THE GENERAL LAY OF THE LAND HAS NOT CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY. PUTIN STILL APPEARS TO BE ON TRACK TOWARD VICTORY,

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 06024 01 OF 02 101711Z
WITH MOST OBSERVERS AND POLLSTERS ALIKE CALLING HIS FIRST ROUND WIN "VERY LIKELY." THEY ALSO BELIEVE THAT VOTER TURNOUT WILL BE HIGHER THAN THE 50 PERCENT TURNOUT NEEDED FOR THE ELECTION TO BE VALID AND COULD BE AS HIGH AS 60-PLUS PERCENT. EVEN POLLSTER [REDACTED]

B6

[REDACTED], WHO PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED THAT A SECOND ROUND WAS PROBABLE, NOW BELIEVES PUTIN WILL WIN ON MARCH 26. PUTIN'S POLL RATINGS HAVE LEVELED-OFF, BUT HE REMAINS WAY AHEAD OF HIS CLOSEST RIVAL, KPRF LEADER GENNADIY ZYUGANOV. VARIOUS POLLS SHOW SUPPORT FOR PUTIN BETWEEN 49-59 PERCENT. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] TOLD US THAT PUTIN'S SUPPORT IS CONSISTENTLY HIGH AMONG ALL DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS WITH THE ONLY VARIATION BEING OLDER VOTERS WHO SUPPORT THE COMMUNIST CANDIDATE.

3. (C) MEANWHILE, THE ACTING PRESIDENT HAS CONTINUED HIS NEARLY NON-STOP TRAVEL SCHEDULE TO VARIOUS PARTS OF RUSSIA, OSTENSIBLY ON PRESIDENTIAL BUSINESS. NEVERTHELESS, EVERY STOP PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUTIN TO MEET WITH KEY CONSTITUENCIES AND TO MAKE PROMISES, IN ESSENCE, TO CAMPAIGN. CAMPAIGNING IN THE ELECTRONIC MEDIA HAS BEEN ALLOWED SINCE MARCH 3, INCLUDING A SERIES OF CANDIDATE DEBATES ON THE NATIONAL PUBLIC TELEVISION STATIONS. SO FAR, THESE, LIKE MOST OF THE REST OF THE CAMPAIGN, HAVE BEEN LACKLUSTER. THE ONE CANDIDATE WHOM EVERYONE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM, THE FRONTRUNNER, HAS DECLINED TO PARTICIPATE. IN FACT, PUTIN HAS ESCHEWED NOT ONLY

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

DEBATES, BUT ADVERTISING AS WELL. PUTIN TOLD THE
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 MOSCOW 06024 01 OF 02 101711Z
PRESS THAT ADVERTISING AND HIS PARTICIPATION IN
DEBATES WERE "NOT NECESSARY." HE'S RIGHT SINCE HIS
ACTIVITIES RECEIVE WIDE COVERAGE DAILY IN THE PRINT
AND ELECTRONIC MEDIA.

RUNNING ON FEAR -- THE OPPONENTS

4. (C) WHILE THE PUBLIC CAMPAIGN HAS LACKED BOTH
SUSPENSE AND SPARKLE, IT IS NOT WITHOUT ITS SHARE OF
BEHIND-THE-SCENES INTRIGUES.

[Redacted]

B1, B6

[Large Redacted Area]

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ4866

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 06024 02 OF 02 101711Z
ACTION EUR-01

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	INL-01	DODE-00
	DOEE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	LAB-01	L-00	MCO-01	MOFM-04	MOF-03	M-00
	AC-01	NRRC-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	IRM-00
	SSO-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	SA-01	IIP-00	SNIS-00	NISC-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	FDIC-01	NFAT-00
	SAS-00	/021W					

-----3DA6D9 101712Z /38

O 101656Z MAR 00
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9066

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

INFO MOSCOW POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
CIS COLLECTIVE

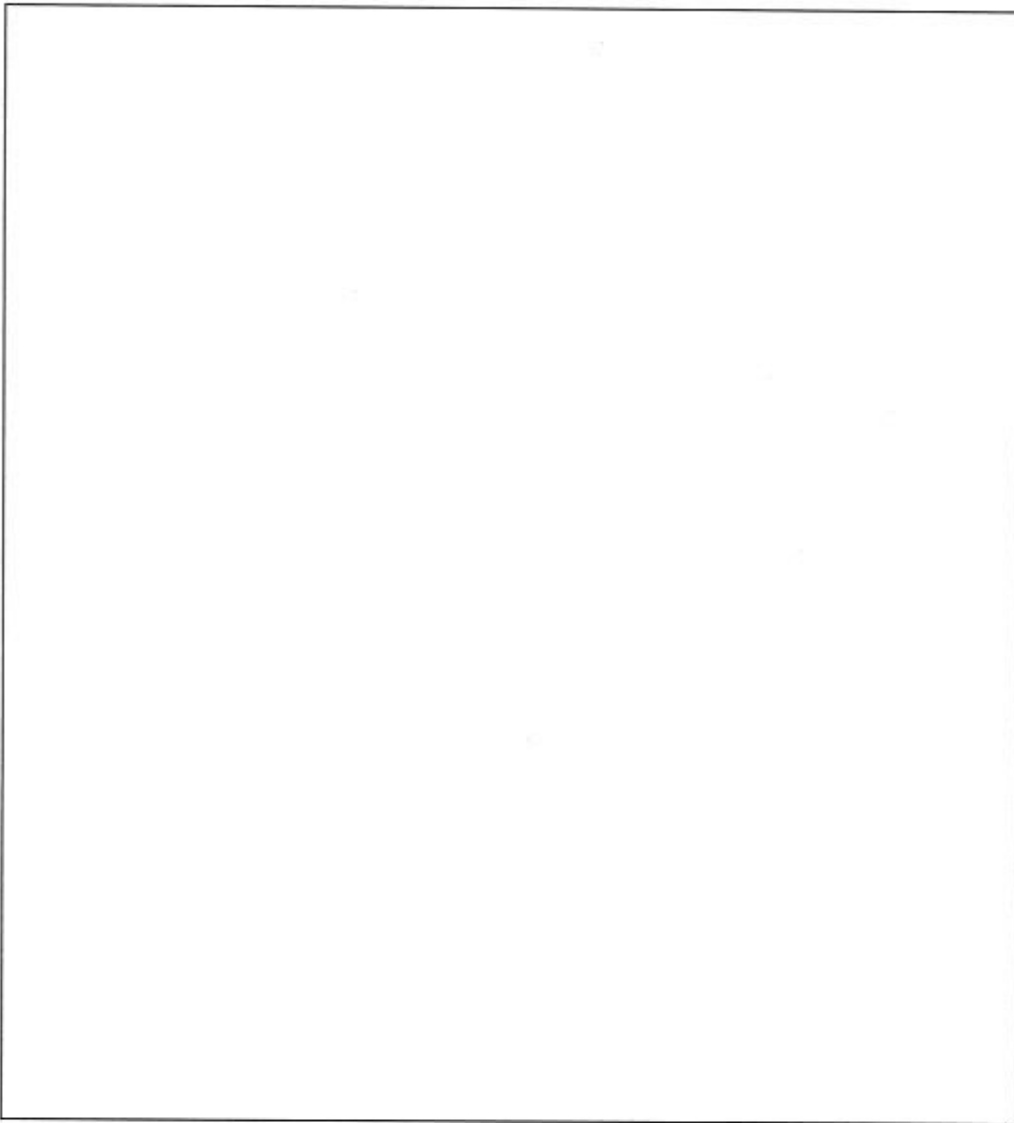
C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 006024

HELSINKI PLEASE PASS TO ST. PETERSBURG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 3/10/10

TAGS: PGOV, RS

SUBJECT: RUSSIA'S PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION -- BALANCING
INTRIGUE AND FEAR DURING THE CAMPAIGN'S LAST TWO WEEKS



STRIKING A BALANCE - GOVERNORS

CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03

MOSCOW 06024 02 OF 02 101711Z

7. (C) ACCORDING TO SOME, REGIONAL LEADERS ALSO FEAR PUTIN AND WONDER WHAT A PUTIN VICTORY WILL MEAN FOR THEM. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] TOLD POLOFF THAT MOST REGIONAL LEADERS WANT TO ALLY THEMSELVES WITH THE STRONG CENTRAL AUTHORITY. RESPONDING TO PRESSURE FROM THE KREMLIN, REGIONAL LEADERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE HEAVILY DEPENDENT ON TRANSFER PAYMENTS, WILL WORK HARD TO DELIVER THE VOTE FOR PUTIN. WHILE THEY WANT TO CURRY FAVOR WITH HIM, THEY ALSO WANT TO AVOID RETRIBUTION IF THEY ARE AMONG THE FEW WHO FAILED TO DELIVER. ALTHOUGH SOME REGIONAL LEADERS MAY BE TEMPTED TO COMMIT FRAUD TO ENSURE THAT TURNOUT IS HIGH ENOUGH, THEY ALSO HAVE OTHER LEVERS TO USE, INCLUDING INFORMAL PATRONAGE AND INFLUENCE ON THE REGIONAL MEDIA. [REDACTED] MAINTAINED THAT THE HIGH PROBABILITY OF PUTIN'S VICTORY, AND OF REACHING AT LEAST THE MINIMUM VOTER TURNOUT, ARGUES AGAINST THE NEED FOR FRAUD IN MOST AREAS.

8. (C) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] PREDICTED SOME GOVERNORS, FEARING A BLOWOUT VICTORY FOR PUTIN WILL GIVE HIM TOO MUCH POWER, MAY NOT WORK AS HARD TO TURN OUT THE VOTE. [REDACTED] TOLD US THAT POLLING DATA SHE HAD SEEN SHOWED PUTIN WITH 63 PERCENT SUPPORT NATIONWIDE, BUT ONLY WITH 37 PERCENT SUPPORT IN MOSCOW. SHE WARNED THAT A POOR SHOWING IN MOSCOW WOULD NOT PORTEND WELL FOR THE MAYOR. THE MAYOR MAY NOT BE AT FAULT, HOWEVER. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] TOLD US THAT LUZHKOV

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04

MOSCOW 06024 02 OF 02 101711Z

HAD ACCEPTED REALITY AND, CONSEQUENTLY, RELATIONS BETWEEN MOSCOW AND THE KREMLIN SHOULD IMPROVE.

COMMENT

9. (C) ALTHOUGH THE ELECTION'S OUTCOME AND THE QUESTION OF VOTER TURNOUT APPEAR LESS IN DOUBT EVERY DAY, TWO WILD CARDS REMAIN -- "AGAINST ALL" AND THE UNDECIDEDS. THE NUMBER OF UNDECIDEDS IS STILL LARGE - - PERHAPS AS HIGH AS 25 PERCENT. MANY OF THEM MAY NOT DECIDE WHOM TO VOTE FOR OR WHETHER TO GO TO THE POLLS UNTIL THE EVE OF THE ELECTION. AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE,

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

THERE LIKELY WILL BE A HIGHER PERCENTAGE OF THOSE
PROTESTING THE LACK OF A CHOICE OF CANDIDATES BY NOT
VOTING AT ALL. [REDACTED] TOLD US THAT IN THE
1996 ELECTION, PEOPLE CAME TO THE POLLS TO VOTE
AGAINST SOMETHING -- EITHER YELTSIN OR THE COMMUNISTS.
IN 2000, VOTERS ARE GOING TO VOTE FOR A CANDIDATE,
ALTHOUGH ALMOST ALL -- PRO- AND ANTI-PUTIN -- SEE THE
OUTCOME AS INEVITABLE.
COLLINS

CONFIDENTIAL

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

UNCLASSIFIED